



Know It!

an e-news service for our partners from the Howard County Tourism Team



Blossoms of Hope: The Howard County Cherry Tree Project

April Means CHERRYBRATION DAYS

April is cherry blossom time in Howard County! [Blossoms of Hope's](#) annual pink season is bringing with it a month-long celebration of activities that honor the beauty of the trees and help promote health and wellness. With more than 1,300 beautiful pink Kwanzan cherry trees blossoming in parks, along roadways and at attractions countywide, travelers and residents can enjoy activities throughout April that celebrate spring, and encourage discovery of Howard County's unique treasures!

Find out more about all the ways our Tourism Partners are joining together to celebrate [Cherrybration Days](#) in Howard County!

TOURISM: Good News!

Good News might be hard to come by these days, but you might be surprised to discover that Tourism is thriving in Howard County. Take a look...

Friday the 13th Ghost Tours are a Sellout!

As the popularity of ghost tours continues to grow worldwide, many visitors continue to discover Howard County's haunted past. Combined with the fascinating stories of the county's history, our tours are a popular way to lure visitors to Howard County.

Our Double Dare for Friday the 13th Ghost Tours in February and March was answered by lots of brave

souls. The special "2 Tour Price" of \$15 for our popular Haunted History of Old Ellicott City Ghost Tour was offered for the first time and included Parts I and II on the same night.

Regularly scheduled ghost tours begin April 3 and run every Friday & Saturday through November. And if the 2-part Haunted History isn't enough, stay tuned for the special "Spirits of Ellicott City" planned for this summer!

Hotel/Group Sales Breakfast Club

Special thanks to Mary Jo McCullough, President and CEO of the [Maryland Tourism Council](#) and the Maryland Hotel and Lodging Association, who was the featured speaker at the March Hotel/Group Sales Breakfast Club meeting. Mary Jo is a highly respected voice for Tourism in Annapolis and Washington, DC and she urged all partners to write to their representatives to inform them of the impact of Tourism funding on their businesses. (See related article, "Meetings Mean Business.")

Now in its 5th year, The Hotel/Group Sales Breakfast Club is a popular bimonthly networking meeting open to hoteliers and any partners interested in group sales leads and industry networking. Enjoy coffee and light breakfast hosted by our partner hotels.

FREE for Tourism Partners and guests, but registration is requested. Email or call the Tourism office at 410-313-1900 to let Rachelina know you're coming (Rachelina@visithowardcounty.com).

COMING Thursday, May 14

Guest Speaker: Kent Menser, Executive Director of Howard County's BRAC Office
8:30 am - 9:30 am (networking begins at 8:15)

Register [here](#)

Chesapeake Shakespeare Company has just posted a record season! Ticket sales have actually increased, as the CSC just closed with the production of *The Country Wife* - performed for 15,000 patrons! The 2009-10 season will open in June with their signature Shakespeare in the Ruins at the Patapsco Female Institute.

The B&O Railroad Museum in Ellicott City announced record visitation in January and February. The oldest surviving railroad station in America, the museum is currently offering tours describing daily life in Ellicott Mills during the Civil War.

Lots of diners discovered Howard County's finest independent restaurants during **Winter Restaurant Weeks!** Twenty-four restaurants offered fixed price menus from Feb. 23 - March 8, and diners responded with enthusiasm! Read our delicious [reviews](#) as the "Noshing Nagles" discovered some new dining treasures!

Save The Date for the Arts

[Celebration of the Arts](#)

Presented by the Howard County Arts Council

Saturday, April 25 - James Rouse Theater

Don't miss this gala fundraiser and evening of entertainment that raises vital funds for arts organizations in the county. The Rising Star competition and Howie Awards are the highlights of the evening, as well as fabulous food from 20 restaurants, and a silent auction of fine art.

[More information...](#)

[Columbia Festival of the Arts Kickoff Event](#)

An Evening with Comedian Henry Cho

Friday, May 15

Black Tie and Biker Chic

Celebrate all things wild and wonderfully Americana, including bikers, rock n' roll, and actor/rancher Henry Cho. Korean-American and Tennessee-born, Cho uses this rare hodgepodge in his standup comedy when he quips, "I'm an Asian with a Southern accent... that right there is funny." Bikers, rock n' rollers and those more formally attired are all welcome!

Order tickets online, and see the 2009 season lineup at www.columbiafestival.org.

The Festival, June 12 - 27, includes an array of regional, national and international performers, guaranteed to delight audiences of all ages.

[Are Your Latest Brochures on Display in](#)

[Turf Valley Resort](#)

Upcoming Trade/Consumer Shows

Howard County Tourism will be participating in the following shows:

April 9

Greater Washington ASAE Springtime in the Park
HSMIAI Affordable Meetings: Chicago

May 16 - 22

TIA Pow Wow: Miami

May 18 - 21

MATPRA Media Marketplace: Rehoboth

October

TEAMS: New Orleans

Partners are needed for HSMIAI National in September: 2 days, 6 slots - \$600 per participant. Call Rachelina for information: 410-313-1900.

Find [more information](#) on Group Sales and Vendor Booth opportunities on our website under the **Partnership** link.

TOURISM ADVOCACY

[A message from the US Travel Association:](#)

Meetings Mean Business is a campaign working to protect the millions of American jobs that depend on business travel and events. *Meetings Mean Business* supports a robust travel industry that employs millions of hardworking Americans in hotels, restaurants and conference centers across the country.

A dozen prominent corporate CEOs recently met with President Obama to discuss travel community concern over rhetoric in Washington discouraging corporate meetings and events. [Read more...](#)

Howard County Tourism Advocates for State Support:

Our Board of Directors' Outreach Committee has actively urged state legislators to support Tourism funding. Executive Director Rachelina Bonacci testified on three occasions in Annapolis on behalf of the Maryland Office of Tourism budget and in support of the bond bill for our Welcome Center renovations.

One in eight Americans works in the travel industry.

The most recent statistics from the Maryland Office of Tourism Development for HOWARD COUNTY show that Tourism generated:

- \$528.72 million in expenditures from domestic visitors
- Over 8,000 jobs
- \$16.1 million in County tax receipts

PLEASE JOIN US ON MONDAY, APRIL 27 for testimony before the County Council, to let them know how important the Tourism industry is to your business!

Find more information and addresses for your representatives on the Advocacy page of our website:

the Welcome Center?

With summer approaching, the **Howard County Welcome Center** in Historic Ellicott City will be busier than ever with visitors. Almost 2,000 visitors a month stop by looking for suggestions on places to go and things to do. Let them know about you! An exclusive benefit for Tourism partners is the availability of display space for marketing materials here. Make sure we have your most current information.

The Calendar of Events on our website is another way to market your business! Send us news of your promotions, packages and calendar information

THANK YOU to LORI PADDY, our Web guru who keeps VisitHowardCounty.com up to date and user-friendly for visitors and customers! Send your calendar updates to [Lori](#) at least 3 weeks ahead of time, and be sure to include date, time, cost if any, and contact information.

[Learn more:](#)

SOIREE! Tourism's Annual Fundraiser

Tuesday, June 2, 2009

Enjoy an evening of fabulous dining, while bidding to win exciting travel packages - and cheer as you watch our Dazzling Dancing Stars in the beautiful tented gardens at Belmont Conference Center.

This is sure to be a sell out again this year!

Tickets are now on sale:

Go to the [Soiree](#) page on the Tourism website.

Contact Amanda Hof for information:

Amanda@visithowardcounty.com

410-313-1904.

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